

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 8 are amended and claims 10-24 are canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter disclosed therein. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action objects to the claims because of informalities. The claims are amended to correct the informalities. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection to the claims is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Watanabe (JP 8-123297); claim 23 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Aruga et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,729,804); claims 10-13, 16, 19 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over Sano et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,549,737); claims 10, 15-16, 20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Matsuura et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,126,799); claims 10-11, 13, 16-17, 20 and 22-24 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Watanabe; claims 4-5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Watanabe in view of Ishikawa (JP 10-282853); claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Sano in view of Setoriyama (U.S. Patent No. 5,543,891); and claim 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Miyasaka et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,081,683) in view of Fuji et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,315,362). The rejections are respectfully traversed.

The cancellation of claims 10-24 render their rejections withdrawn(?). However, none of the applied references, alone or in combination, disclose or suggest, image forming apparatus that includes a main body, a recording medium storage section, a transport path, an image carrier, an optical writing section, and a developing section that includes a first developer storage portion and a second developer storage portion, the developer is dropped from the first developer storage portion to the second developer storage portion, as recited in independent claim 1. Support for this feature can be found in the specification at, for example, paragraph [0062].

Watanabe teaches a process cartridge with a shutter number cable with an opening-closing the developing toner storage part and the recovered toner storage part (constitution). However, Watanabe teaches that the recovered toner storage portion 11 is below the developing storage portion 10a, and does not teach that the developer storage portion 10a includes a first developer storage portion and a second developer storage portion as recited in independent claim 1. Moreover, Watanabe fails to disclose or suggest that the developer is dropped from the first developer storage portion to the second developer storage portion, as also recited in independent claim 1. Thus, Watanabe fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature of independent claim 1.

Ishikawa teaches a cleaner and toner magazine that includes a cleaner, a core bar member rotated by a driving mechanism and a separation member supported by a discharge toner tank (solution). However, Ishikawa's purpose is to efficiently supply lubricant to portions where a cleaning blade and a photoreceptor drum are in contact with each other immediately after the cleaner is exchanged (problem to be solved), and does not disclose or suggest a developer storage section that include a first developer storage medium and a second developer storage portion, and that anywhere the developer is dropped from the first developer storage portion to the second developer storage portion, as recited in claim 1. Last, Ishikawa fails to cure deficiencies in Watanabe in disclosing or rendering obvious the features of independent claim 1.

For at least these reasons, independent claim 1, and its dependent claims, are patentable over a combination of the applied references. Thus, withdrawal of the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-9 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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